

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
CULVER CITY  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

November 30, 2021  
7:00 p.m.

**Call to Order & Roll Call**

Chair Sayles called the special meeting of the Culver City Planning Commission to order at 7:05 p.m. via Webex.

Present: Dana Sayles, Chair  
Nancy Barba, Vice Chair  
Jennifer Carter, Commissioner  
Ed Ogosta, Commissioner  
Andrew Reilman, Commissioner

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**Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Sayles led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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**Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda**

Chair Sayles invited public comment.

Ruth Martin del Campo, Administrative Clerk, discussed procedures for making public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Commission:

Steve Johnson indicated that he wanted to speak on the Housing Element and held his comments for later in the meeting.

James Favaro was called to speak but did not respond.

Bryan Sanders discussed a public records request he made that illuminated early involvement of Christopher Elmendorf who wrote much of the Housing Element Guiding Principles; those looking for guidance in writing a pro-housing Housing Element; and the intent of local officials to monitor and control the consultants with regard to writing the Housing Element.

Ronald Ostrin was called to speak but did not respond.

Mark Lipman reported that on November 16, the Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness had passed a recommendation to eliminate residential parking minimums and create parking maximums around transit.

Jim Favaro provided background on himself; discussed careful consideration of local residential development of the Blackwelder neighborhood to fulfill goals of the City; zoning; participation of property owners in the process; and he indicated that he was available to share their vision for the area.

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#### **Consent Calendar**

None.

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#### **Order of the Agenda**

No changes were made.

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#### **Public Hearing Item**

None.

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**Action Items**

Item A-1

**PC - Review of the Revised Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element Update Pursuant to California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) Comments after their 60-Day Review**

Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director, introduced the item.

Lauren Marsiglia, Acting Advance Planning Manager, provided a summary of the material of record; discussed the agenda; goals of the meeting; preparation of the final draft for review at the January Planning Commission meeting; the Housing Element Update process; the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) review process; and the environmental analysis.

Veronica Tan, Housing Consultant, provided a review of comments received from HCD.

Lauren Marsiglia, Acting Advance Planning Manager, discussed next steps for the Housing Element Update process and consultant availability.

Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director, discussed the decision hearing in January; work to finish responding to HCD and public comment; and he noted that the current meeting was a discussion meeting, not a decision meeting.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding clarification on the process; making use of under-performing shopping centers; the sites inventory; consideration of parcels as a way to offset units removed from the single family zone; potential properties generated by R1; recycling R1; affordable housing; availability of the consultant for the January meeting; budget and timing considerations; City Council approval necessary for an amendment; streamlining the permit process; and generating the largest number of units on commercial corridors.

Ruth Martin del Campo, Administrative Clerk, reported receipt of 55 emailed comments that were distributed to Commissioners and staff prior to the meeting for their review.

Chair Sayles invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Commission:

Bubba Fish was called to speak but did not respond.

Steve Johnson provided background on himself; expressed interest in the positive development of housing in the Blackwelder neighborhood; discussed preservation of neighborhood character; live/work opportunities; light industrial and creative office space; old school development practices; the 30 story building in nearby Los Angeles; clumsy zoning requirements; unintended consequences of zoning language; alternatives; infill development; incentives; creating fully formed communities; and he wanted to be involved in the process.

Alice Collins was called to speak but did not respond.

Stephen Jones asserted that the state was calling for substantive changes to the plan, not little tweaks; he discussed fair housing; deadlines; the call to overcome identified patterns or trends and commit to implement a City-wide affordable housing overlay; alternative actions if progress is not made; incentives; re-zoning; state housing targets; commercial properties; residential capacity calculations; and consequences of non-compliance.

Philip Lelyveld reenforced comments made by Stephen Jones; discussed the need for a plan that would accurately deliver more affordable low and middle income housing; land values; the need for a City-led effort to raise and allocate funds to acquire land to develop affordable housing; the inability of infill development to meet affordability needs; and creation of a funding and development model to deliver the needed affordable housing.

Jamie Wallace challenged comments that rezoning was necessary to meet the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA); noted comments from HCD regarding lack of transparency and diligent efforts; encouraged the Commission to discontinue consideration of the controversial R1 rezoning; discussed redevelopment of shopping centers; errors in the site inventory; failure of the City to meet requirements regarding communication with the public; unsupportable assumptions throughout the Housing Element; the need to focus on underserved areas and redevelopment of shopping centers; and

she asked that the Commission call for a re-write of the Housing Element and that public comment be taken seriously with comments included in the next draft.

Patrick Meighan asked that affordable housing be included in every neighborhood and that the City comply with housing law; discussed equity and fairness; distribution of low-income housing sites; identification of feasible sites; compliance with the City Council mandate; easing permitting and design restrictions; eligibility for ministerial approval; delays and costs; legalization of by-right fourplexes in all neighborhoods; and allowing by-right development of sixplexes if they are 100% affordable.

Ronald Boykin provided background on himself; discussed Culver City for More Housing; and he felt that more affordable housing was needed in every neighborhood in the City.

Paavo Monkkonen asked that consideration of the likelihood of development be added to the process; discussed affordable housing; percentage of affordable housing in the most affluent communities; measurable program goals; quantified objectives for all programs; streamlining processes; reducing development standards and setbacks; and he wanted to see fourplexes be by-right in all R1 zoned neighborhoods.

Linda T. provided background on herself; thanked the City for their work on the item; discussed the importance of spreading housing throughout all neighborhoods; easing design and permitting restrictions; higher costs for expensive unused land; by-right fourplexes without designating the fourth unit as low-income; supporting flexible use of land; encouraging density; and providing housing for more than those making six figure incomes.

Michelle Weiner was called to speak but did not respond.

Jacob Pierce asserted that there was no place for commercial-only zoning; discussed converting shopping areas; furthering fair housing; issues with locating housing on corridors; easing permitting and design restrictions; and he expressed support for by-right fourplexes in all neighborhoods with by-right sixplexes if they are 100% affordable housing.

Kate Ainslie provided background on herself; thanked the City for their efforts; echoed comments made by Culver City for More Homes; expressed support for fourplexes in R1 zoned

areas; discussed easing permitting and design restrictions; and compliance with furthering fair housing.

Elias Platte-Bermeo was called to speak but did not respond.

Nick Guthman provided background on himself; expressed support for Culver City for More Homes; and discussed providing equitable and fair housing policies for everyone.

John Flynn provided background on himself; discussed the failure to address housing needs over the past two decades; the need to add housing at all income levels throughout the entire City; honestly addressing the state's rejection of the City's proposal; data and permitting; affirmatively furthering fair housing; making it easier to build housing; the importance of equity; and he asked that those wanting to join or stay in the community be considered.

Laura Embrey was called to speak but did not respond.

Annie Lefton asked that the Housing Element submitted for review not be approved due to errors; discussed traffic, pollution and decreased safety; the increase proposed; she asked that R1 zoning not be changed noting better ways to achieve the goals; and she requested clarification on what is considered affordable.

Elliot Lee provided background on himself; expressed support for by-right fourplexes without requiring a lot split; discussed creating starter home opportunities; creating more housing; reducing Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT); the need for a commitment to urban infill; and the need to increase opportunities for all income levels in all neighborhoods.

Tish Scolnik provided background on herself; discussed the need for affirmative fair housing and to increase opportunities for all income levels in all neighborhoods; easing permitting and design restrictions; and support for by-right fourplexes in all neighborhoods.

Gary Brown echoed comments made by Annie Lefton; discussed negative impacts on older, narrow streets with the approval of up-zoning; parking; concern with the effects of densification on Oregon Street; and he asked for an exemption for narrow streets.

Khin Khin Gyi, Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness, discussed the Housing Element submitted by the City and the focus on the elimination of R1 zoning; the importance of learning from the experiences of other cities; the failure of up-zoning to create affordable housing; the process; Brown Act violations; the need for hybrid meetings to accommodate the digitally challenged crowd; and concern with agism.

Lorri Horn discussed the "either/or" fallacy; figuring out how to make true diversity within existing zoning; and advocacy for affordable housing in all areas.

Marci Baun expressed concern with speakers who all use the same talking points; provided background on herself; discussed the proposed elimination of single family zoning; different housing types available; fairness; ways to make the City more affordable without destroying neighborhoods; and she asserted that fourplexes would not create affordable housing.

Cindy Bayley was called to speak but did not respond.

Robin Turner was called to speak but did not respond.

Teri Mulugeta was called to speak but did not respond.

Jeannine Wisnosky Stehlin thanked Bryan Sanders for his public records requests; discussed concern that an outside entity was advising elected officials to monitor and control consultants; public comment to support a pre-planned or ideological Housing Element; planned speeches from members of the group that Vice Chair Barba is a principal organizer of; comments from HCD about the Housing Element; the rejection by HCD of the notion that Culver City has to eliminate R1 zoning in order to meet housing needs; she felt that creative thinking could be used to find affordable solutions that do not harm others in the process; and she urged the City to listen to HCD and do it right.

Hannah Rhodes discussed diversity in the community; bringing in affordable housing to all areas of the City; the homeless crisis; healthcare; she felt that affordable housing was not a threat to the community; and she expressed support for work done to improve affordable housing in the City.

Michael Ainslie expressed appreciation to the City for their leadership; discussed the progressive and forward looking stance on housing and mobility; the 20<sup>th</sup> century model of single family homes and zoning; allowing the state to keep up with growth; guidelines that further fair housing and actual housing production; design guidelines; development that allows for livable cities; and he urged compliance with comments made by HCD.

Bryan Sanders discussed politicization of the issue; money coming into the process from those who fund California YIMBY (Yes In My Back Yard) law; talking points from Culver City for More Homes that support Mark Zuckerberg; public records; additional information available at [bit.ly/ccpubrec](https://bit.ly/ccpubrec); the Housing Element conversation between Professor Monkkonen at UCLA and Professor Elmendorf at UC Davis; and concern with monitoring and control of the consultant.

Ronald Ostrin discussed trickle-down economics and the wholesale elimination of R1 housing; traffic, parking and environmental impacts of densification; rampant development; overtaxing infrastructure; placing duplexes on corner lots; quality of life; and he expressed concern with ruining the City.

Ian Gullien discussed duplicative responses; the proposal to up-zone R1; lack of infrastructure; failure to increase affordability; concern with increasing home prices; he asked the Commission to focus efforts on outdated retail and office space; creation of new environmentally friendly neighborhoods; the market-driven process; and he asked that R1 be left alone.

Meg Sullivan observed how unpopular up-zoning is and noted that it was unlikely to produce affordable housing; encouraged the City to provide higher height limits; discussed the neighborhood multi-family category; accommodating additional housing; and she asked that existing, aging multi-family properties located near existing transportation be examined.

Manny Salcido was called to speak but did not respond.

Mark Lipman discussed rejection of the Housing Element; the lack of a tangible way to get low-income housing; those most in need; the level of entitlement and cognitive disconnect over the level of housing that is needed; the importance of



understanding where the money is coming from for the talking points; funding by the major tech industry; younger people who make 6 figures; older people who are being priced out; support for the most vulnerable in the community; creation of a community land trust and a vacancy tax; raising money to reinvest into the community with a major corporations tax; and he asked the Commission to think outside of the box.

Manny Salcido, Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters, provided background on himself; expressed support for comments made by Michael Ainslie; and he discussed utilization of a local and skilled workforce.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding meeting procedures and the intent to collect public testimony.

Melissa Sanders was called to speak but did not respond.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the ability of homeowners to decide whether to sell or redevelop their homes; the requirement that the City adopt a new Housing Element that complies with HCD feedback; the inability to maintain the status quo; concern with losing control over project approval; the consequences of doing nothing; infrastructure; feedback from HCD; setting a date certain for implementation of strategies; reconsideration of strategies if homes are not being built; the need to address furthering fair housing; creating homes in high opportunity neighborhoods; California Assembly Bill (AB) 686; combating discrimination; overcoming patterns of segregation; creating opportunities for affordable units; creation of a realistic Housing Element; adding a ballot measure to fund affordable housing; laying out a plan to fund affordable homes; integrating Senate Bill (SB) 10 into the Housing Element; attracting the attention of builders; economic diversity; setting a floor on the number of units that can be built on a lot; allowing opportunities for lot splits; making fourplexes by-right; costs to go through the process; ministerial review; streamlining development processes; examining the length of time required to review residential projects; setting metrics to measure the review; being viewed as a City that is doing things in the most efficient way; providing sample Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) designs; staff resources; and expediting approval processes.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding effective densification; different zoning code systems; creating a walkable environment in a city built around automobiles; adjacency of housing with other uses; the need for good design; the importance of implementation; concern with current incentives; concern that aims would not be achieved; project thresholds; investigating office and light industrial areas for densification; confusion regarding the site inventory; and the need for clarification regarding what streamlining the permit process would be like.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding crafting options for consideration; concern with misinformation and lack of knowledge in the feedback; options to consider; the perception that developers will rush in and build the maximum number of units possible; the need to rely on design guidelines; and examining places in the City to provide the housing that is needed.

Melissa Sanders expressed frustration at working hard to get a home in a neighborhood that could be very much changed by decisions of people for something that is not needed; she discussed supply and demand; considering development of commercial spaces; and choice.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the Appendix in the letter from the state; equitable distribution of housing; support for real estate capacity assumptions; consideration of imposing penalties for building a single family home on an R2 lot; clarification that the Housing Element does not set the land use policy; requirements of SB 9; exploration of an affordable housing overlay; streamlining; making a difference in the community; the Housing Element as a tool to accommodate a certain intensity of housing; the requirement to show capacity; ensuring the tools are in place to accommodate housing; lofty goals vs. what can be practically achieved; acknowledging that incremental density in single family zoning produces additional housing, but not affordable housing; identification of suitable shopping center sites and reducing the number of single family zones that are opportunity sites; concern with the elitist position of not allowing change in a neighborhood that one has bought into; equity; the need to promote change and progress; development, evolution and change; design guidelines as being critical to the process; the importance of streamlining processes; embracing permissions from the state; eliminating barriers to

development; live/work in the Hayden Tract; other cities with live/work areas; creating a multi-faceted district; encouraging mixed use to reduce driving; maintaining stability in the City; concern with placing a burden on developers by imposing minimum densities; inclusionary housing; incentive-based housing; the final response to HCD; the iterative process; and density bonuses.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding distribution of housing; affordable housing; financing; the requirement from HCD; capacity to accommodate the need; design; addressing comments in the final draft; guidelines; streamlining; examining the site inventory for additional housing opportunities; next steps in the process; scheduling; and providing a clear focus.

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**Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda (Continued)**

Ruth Martin del Campo, Administrative Clerk, invited Ronald Ostrin and any other members of the public to speak, but did not receive a response.

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**Receipt of Correspondence**

None.

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**Items from Planning Commissioners/Staff**

Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director, discussed items for consideration at upcoming meetings and items germane to the Housing Element.

Vice Chair Barba expressed frustration with the delay to the mixed use streamlining discussion.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding staffing and workload; clarification that the December 8 meeting would not be held; scheduling; items to be considered; staff coordination; workflow in different divisions; and issues complicating the ability to meet demand.

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**Adjournment**

There being no further business, at 10:40 p.m., the Culver City Planning Commission adjourned.

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RUTH MARTIN DEL CAMPO  
ADMINISTRATIVE CLERK of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

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DANA SAYLES  
CHAIR of the CULVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
Culver City, California

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that, on the date below written, these minutes were filed in the Office of the City Clerk, Culver City, California and constitute the Official Minutes of said meeting.

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Jeremy Green  
CITY CLERK

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Date